

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
30 June 2005 (30.06.2005)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2005/058855 A1

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **C07D 307/08**

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/GB2004/005054

(22) International Filing Date: 1 December 2004 (01.12.2004)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
0329152.3 16 December 2003 (16.12.2003) GB

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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,
AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN,
CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI,
GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE,
KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD,
MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG,
PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM,
TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM,
ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH,
GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM,
ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM),
European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI,
FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO,
SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN,
GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— with international search report

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guid-
ance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the begin-
ning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: **PROCESS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF ETHERS**

(57) Abstract: A process for the production of an ether optionally with a diol and/or a lactone, by reaction of a corresponding organic feed material selected from unsaturated dicarboxylic acids and/or anhydrides, mono-esters of unsaturated dicarboxylic acids and/or anhydrides, diesters of unsaturated dicarboxylic acids and/or anhydrides, unsaturated lactones, and mixtures of two or more thereof in the presence of hydrogen which comprises the steps of-(a)supplying a stream comprising at least a portion of the organic feed material to a pre-reactor zone comprising catalyst and operating under reaction conditions and contacting said feed with a hydrogen containing stream such that at least some of the carbon carbon double bonds are saturated;(b)vaporising the at least partly saturated feed into the hydrogen containing stream in a vaporising zone;(c)supplying the hydrogen-containing stream containing the vaporised at least partially saturated feed to a reaction zone comprising catalyst and operating under reaction conditions; (d)recovering from the reaction zone a product stream comprising the ether and optionally diol and/or lactone; and (e)recycling depleted hydrogen-containing stream to at least the pre-reactor zone or the vaporisation zone.



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